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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 001004

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SUBJECT: UN/SUDAN SANCTIONS: QATAR CALLS FOR SANCTIONS ON  
REBELS

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JACKIE WOLCOTT, FOR REASONS: 1.4(B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: During an informal meeting of the Sudan Sanctions Committee on November 7, Qatar expressed a strong interest in imposing targeted sanctions on JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim and SLM faction leader Abdelwahid el-Nur for their failure to attend the UN/AU-led Darfur mediation in Tripoli. While Qatar insisted it was seeking preliminary views, Qatari Counselor Qahtani hinted privately to USUN that Qatar was committed to sanctions action in the Council, where any Sudan sanctions designation would have a higher profile than in the Committee. While USUN and the UK would not comment without instructions, no delegation expressed outright opposition to the proposal and China supported further Committee consideration of the suggestion. End summary.

¶2. (C) ACTION REQUEST: USUN seeks Department guidance on responding to Qatar's proposal to designate Khalil Ibrahim and Abdelwahid el-Nur for targeted sanctions pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005). End action request.

¶3. (C) During the November 7 informal meeting of the Sudan Sanctions Committee Qatar sought the views of delegations on imposing targeted sanctions on JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim and SLM faction leader Abdelwahid el-Nur for their failure to attend the UN/AU-led Darfur mediation talks that began on October 27 in Tripoli. Qatar argued that Ibrahim's and Abdelwahid's absence at the talks constituted an impediment to the peace process per paragraph 3 (c) of resolution 1591, and that sanctions would bolster Jan Eliasson's and Salim Salim's mediation efforts. However, Qatar underlined that it was not formally proposing these names for the Committee's consideration, but rather seeking delegations' positions.

¶4. (C) USUN responded that it could not comment on the desirability of such action without instructions, which the UK echoed. Indonesia, Ghana, and Congo sought further details, such as whether Qatar would be formally submitting the names for designation for Committee consideration, but Ghana also expressed support for any sanctions that would return the rebels to the negotiating table. South Africa emphasized that prospective sanctions must assist and not undermine the peace process, and that to be consistent in its application of sanctions the Committee should consider GOS candidates as well. China stated it would be willing to further consider the proposal. France and Russia did not

comment.

¶5. (C) Qatari Political Counselor Mutlaq al-Qahtani approached USUN privately on November 8 to express his delegation's strong desire to impose sanctions on Ibrahim and Abdelwahid, and hinted that Qatar might put the names for targeted sanctions before the Council, rather than before the Committee, to raise the profile of the designations. When asked whether Qatar was considering a broader list of targets, Qahtani responded that Qatar wanted to keep the focus on these two individuals. Qahtani also said that China had expressed its support for moving forward, though China subsequently indicated to USUN that it had not yet received final instructions. China also observed that the USG had already domestically sanctioned Khalil Ibrahim.

¶6. (C) COMMENT: While the decision to impose further sanctions is a political matter that must be weighed against other considerations, Qatar's overture may provide a useful opening to discuss the threat of sanctions against both rebel leaders and GOS officials responsible for human rights violations, delaying the deployment of UNAMID, or refusing to cooperate with the ICC. Qatar's unprecedented call for Committee action may represent a unique opportunity for Council action on sanctions that has the support of all members, even those perceived to be pro-Khartoum, while also offering us the leverage to press for a broader list of targets. United Council action would both send a strong signal to the parties about the Council's commitment to forward progress on Darfur and raise the cost to the parties of impeding the peace process. End comment.  
Khalilzad